

MRRIC

Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee



Annual Report 2014 - 2015



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Introduction

The Missouri River is the longest river in North America, flowing over 2,340 miles through seven states. Its basin encompasses over 529,000 square miles. It has been a source of sustenance and transportation for more than 12,000 years. The river basin was heavily developed in the 20th century, affecting the environment and human interests.



The Missouri River Recovery

Implementation Committee (MRRIC or Committee) comprises of nearly 70 representatives of Tribes, stakeholder groups, states and federal agencies from all parts of the Missouri River Basin. Through this Committee, members can express their interests in a collaborative forum while developing a shared vision and comprehensive plan for Missouri River recovery. This report covers MRRIC's seventh year of activity: October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015.

Purposes

The Committee's purposes are set forth in Section 5018 of the 2007 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and include

- Providing guidance to federal agencies on the existing Missouri River recovery plan, including priorities for recovery work and implementing changes based on the results of adaptive management.
- Providing guidance to federal agencies on a long-term study of the Missouri River and its tributaries to determine actions required to mitigate losses of aquatic and terrestrial habitat, recovery of federally listed species, and restore the ecosystem to prevent further declines among other native species.
- Developing recommendations that recognize the social, economic and cultural interests of stakeholders; mitigate the impacts on those interests; and advance the multiple uses of the river.

Origins

In 1989, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) announced it would undertake a revision of the Master Water Control Manual (Master Manual) for Missouri River Reservoir Operations, the principal water management tool for the river. The extensive revision process coincided with the listing of the pallid sturgeon, least tern and piping plover as threatened or endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act; the issuance by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) of two biological opinions on steps necessary to preclude jeopardy to these species; and extensive federal and state court litigation on water management and species recovery issues.

When USACE finalized the revised Master Manual in 2004, the agency committed to establishing a group consisting of stakeholders and sovereign nations to be known as the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee, often referred to as MRRIC.

Commencing in 2005, USACE, USFWS and other federal agencies enlisted the assistance of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (USIECR) to develop a process for establishing MRRIC. These steps included a Situation Assessment that concluded a group, such as the MRRIC, was needed to assist in the coordination of recovery actions in the basin. The assessment also concluded federal agencies take a leadership role in establishing this Committee.



A Working Group of federal agency representatives organized a Planning Group to draft a governing document for MRRIC. The group comprised appointed members and alternates from basin Tribes and states, and self-selected nongovernmental participants from a wide range of basin interests. The Planning Group proposed a Charter to the Secretary of the Army in February 2008. Following Government-to-Government consultation with basin Tribes, the Charter was approved by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works at the Planning Group's final meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, on July 1, 2008. For additional information on the background of MRRIC, please visit www.MRRIC.org.

Membership

MRRIC's membership includes representatives of eight states and 22 of the eligible 29 basin Tribes. The 29 stakeholder members, representing 16 different interest categories, apply to and are selected by the USACE's Northwestern Division Commander to serve three-year terms. Federal agency representatives are appointed by their agency. USACE and USFWS serve as lead agencies. For additional information about MRRIC membership, please visit www.MRRIC.org.

Organization

Members select the Vice Chair and provide input on the Committee's Chair and facilitation team. USIECR provides support services to MRRIC through a Memorandum of Understanding with USACE, and in turn contracts with the Chair and the facilitation team.

Recommendations

The Committee approves its recommendations by a consensus vote; each recommendation proposal is fully vetted through Work Group deliberations and discussions at one or more MRRIC meetings. While this process is often tedious, it encourages informed decision making and widespread agreement for approved recommendations.

The preamble to the MRRIC Charter reiterates that the Committee's purpose is to "make recommendations and provide guidance on a study of the Missouri River and its tributaries and on the existing Missouri River recovery and mitigation plan." The Charter also defines recommendations as "official suggestions, comments, or advice representing the consensus of the Committee and provided to the appropriate governmental or non-governmental agencies,

groups or persons.” The Charter further states that the goal of the Committee is to reach consensus on all substantive issues brought before it. Substantive issues are defined as “issues for which the Committee is considering developing recommendations and other decisions identified as substantive in the Committee’s operating rules and procedures.”

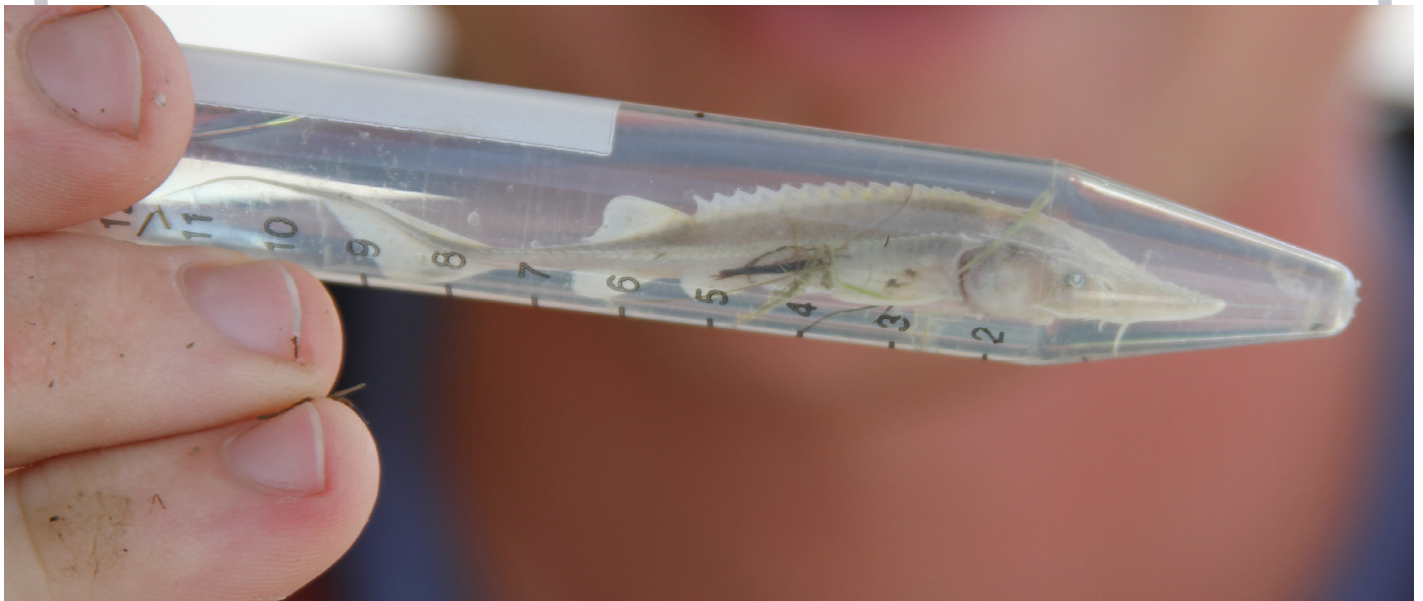
The Committee’s operating procedures and ground rules clarify that a substantive issue is an issue for which the Committee is considering developing recommendations and guidance consistent with the Committee’s Purpose and Scope, as well as other issues identified as substantive by any member of the Committee.

Consensus recommendations made on substantive issues require a two-step decision-making process, with a tentative recommendation made at an initial meeting and a final recommendation made no sooner than the next MRRIC meeting. The two-step process is intended to allow time between the tentative and final consensus recommendation determinations for members to deliberate and consult with their constituents.

In its seventh year of operation, the Committee made six substantive recommendations to the lead agencies. For complete information of substantive recommendations and agencies’ responses, please visit www.MRRIC.org.

Summary of Substantive Recommendations and Responses Received (October 2014 – September 2015)

MRRIC Recommendations	Lead Agency Response
<p>FY16 Missouri River Recovery Program Work Plan, August 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend the Corps working with the USFWS develop a peer review process, in discussion with MRRIC, of all aspects of the pallid sturgeon propagation effort. • Recommend maintaining full, consistent funding for ISP efforts directed at answering key pallid sturgeon questions to implement the Management Plan. • Recommend restoring funding for the ambient water quality monitoring program and would like to see this budget item increased in the future depending on future effects analysis results. • Recommend maintaining or enhancing water quality monitoring to provide information necessary to evaluate water quality effects on pallid sturgeon. • Requests the USACE provide its plan for BSNP mitigation moving forward in the Mgt. Plan effort. • Recommend sharing FY16 Work Plan again before final so MRRIC can potentially assist in any budget re-allocation decisions. 	<p>USACE Response</p> <p>Response was not available during this reporting period; check online for updates under the Recommendations tab; www.MRRIC.org</p>
<p>Expedite Implementation of Reimbursing Travel Expense, February 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRRIC recommends USACE expedite implementation of reimbursing Committee member travel expenses as stated in Water Resources Reform Development Act of 2014, Section 4013. 	<p>USACE Response</p> <p>Response was not available during this reporting period; check online for updates under the Recommendations tab; www.MRRIC.org</p>
<p>Regular Attendance and Engagement of the Environmental Protection Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend the Environmental Protection Agency attend MRRIC meetings regularly. 	<p>EPA responded to MRRIC’s letter stating that their limited role in MRRIC does not warrant regular attendance at MRRIC. However, EPA will continue to participate on an ad hoc basis.</p>
<p>Letter to ASA Jo Ellen Darcy regarding real property acquisition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation to prepare a letter for ASA Darcy requesting a meeting to discuss the Corps’ approach for acquiring required real property in support of MRRP and the Bank Stabilization and Navigation Project. 	<p>ASA Darcy responded to MRRIC’s request and has asked that a meeting be scheduled with Mr. Eric Hansen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget</p>



Work Group

The Committee has established standing Work Groups consisting of MRRIC members, alternates, agency staff and others approved by the full Committee. Work Groups allow MRRIC members to better understand the actions at hand and work directly with the agencies to make recommendations on how the Missouri River Recovery Program (MRRP) can be as effective as possible while ensuring public values are incorporated into the plans.

The Work Groups are indispensable for carrying out MRRIC's work. The groups meet by facilitated conference calls and occasional in-person meetings. They help prepare and review presentations for plenary sessions and develop recommendations for MRRIC's consideration.

Agenda Work Group Summary

The Agenda Work Group collaborates with the Committee's Chair in developing the agenda for each MRRIC meeting. The members are selected by the Chair to ensure balanced representation and cannot exceed seven members. Membership rotates so that no one serves on this Work Group for more than two consecutive meetings. MRRIC members representing federal agencies are not permitted to serve on the Agenda Work Group.



Communications Work Group Summary

Throughout the 2015 fiscal year, the Communications Work Group participated in the development and finalization of several communication materials, including media press kits; post-plenary meeting press releases, newsletters, and PowerPoint presentations; and an article about MRRIC. The Work Group also continued its work with the USACE to improve

internal and external information-sharing processes. Additionally, the Work Group developed and submitted the Committee's annual report, modified the Committee's annual self-assessment survey, and facilitated the annual self-assessment process. As requested by MRRIC, the Communications Work Group continued to administer and analyze the use of remote meeting observation technology during plenary meetings.

During fiscal year 2016, the Communications Work Group will continue to develop communication materials, create the annual report, facilitate the annual self-assessment process, and serve as a resource for the Committee's technology needs.



Science and Adaptive Management Work Group Summary

Throughout fiscal year 2015, the Science and Adaptive Management (SAM) Work Group continued to work with the Independent Science Advisory Panel (ISAP) to guide MRRIC recommendations regarding prioritization of the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and adaptation actions of the Missouri River Recovery Program (MRRP). The Work Group also reviewed and provided draft recommendations related to the MRRP's Annual Work Plan for MRRIC's consideration. Additionally, the work group evaluated monitoring, studies and habitat plans as they relate to the least tern, piping plover and pallid sturgeon.

The SAM Work Group developed and provided MRRIC with a recommendation on the Corps' FY16 MRRP Work Plan. The recommendation provided the Corps with the Committee's priorities on current MRRP efforts. The recommendation regarding this Work Plan received final MRRIC consensus in August 2015. Additionally, the Strategic Programmatic Assessment (SPA) Task Group, a subgroup of SAM, met with the ISAP and the Effects Analysis team multiple times to understand the process being undertaken, provide questions and input when necessary, and to assist in efforts to convey the results to MRRIC.

At the August 2015 meeting, MRRIC also approved a recommendation that consolidated the SPA and Tern and Plover Task Groups into the SAM Work Group. This was done to increase the efficiency of the ongoing process with the agencies and the continued engagement with the ISAP. The change reduces the number of conference calls and emails for SAM members while still providing the opportunity for work group involvement and input.

The SAM Work Group will continue to define the steps needed to implement the MRRIC proposed actions from the ISAP Spring Pulse Report using the ProACT approach and incorporate the Effects Analysis Scope of Work in the development of an Adaptive Management/Monitoring Plan.

Tribal Interests Work Group Summary

Throughout the fiscal year 2015, the Tribal Interests Work Group continued to provide information and advice on Tribal-related issues to MRRIC and incorporate Tribal concerns into the work of MRRIC. Specifically, the Work Group served as a resource to MRRIC on Tribal interests, implemented a plan to address obstacles to Tribal participation in MRRIC, and implemented an outreach plan to Missouri River Basin Tribes.

The Work Group met in person at each of the quarterly MRRIC plenary meetings. During each of these meetings, members discussed the Missouri River Recovery Management Plan (MRRMP) development process; identified information needs and questions; and provided feedback related to Tribal interests. The Tribal Interests Work Group also provided input into the agenda and plans for several USACE meetings with Tribes around the Missouri River basin regarding the MRRMP development.



Ad Hoc Work Group Summaries

The Committee has also established Ad Hoc Work Groups. These groups are formed to address a specific issue and disband upon completion of their work.

Adaptive Management Ad Hoc Group Summary



The Adaptive Management Ad Hoc Group was established to help evaluate and make recommendations to MRRIC on how MRRIC, the Independent Science Advisory Panel (ISAP), and the Independent Socio-Economic Technical Review (ISETR) should engage with the lead agencies in implementation of the AM Plan.

During FY 2015, the AM Ad Hoc Group learned about other AM efforts, based on analysis completed by lead agencies and contractors, and assisted in increasing MRRIC's understanding of those efforts.



The Ad Hoc Group engaged with the lead agencies and the Effects Analysis team through conversations and document review and comment as they began developing the AM governance portion of the Missouri River Recovery Management Plan (MRRMP). By utilizing a series of “decision scenarios,” responding to surveys and discussing the results, the Ad Hoc Group assisted the lead agencies in efforts to begin defining a decision process that balances the need for timely programmatic adjustments with the need for input/participation from stakeholders.

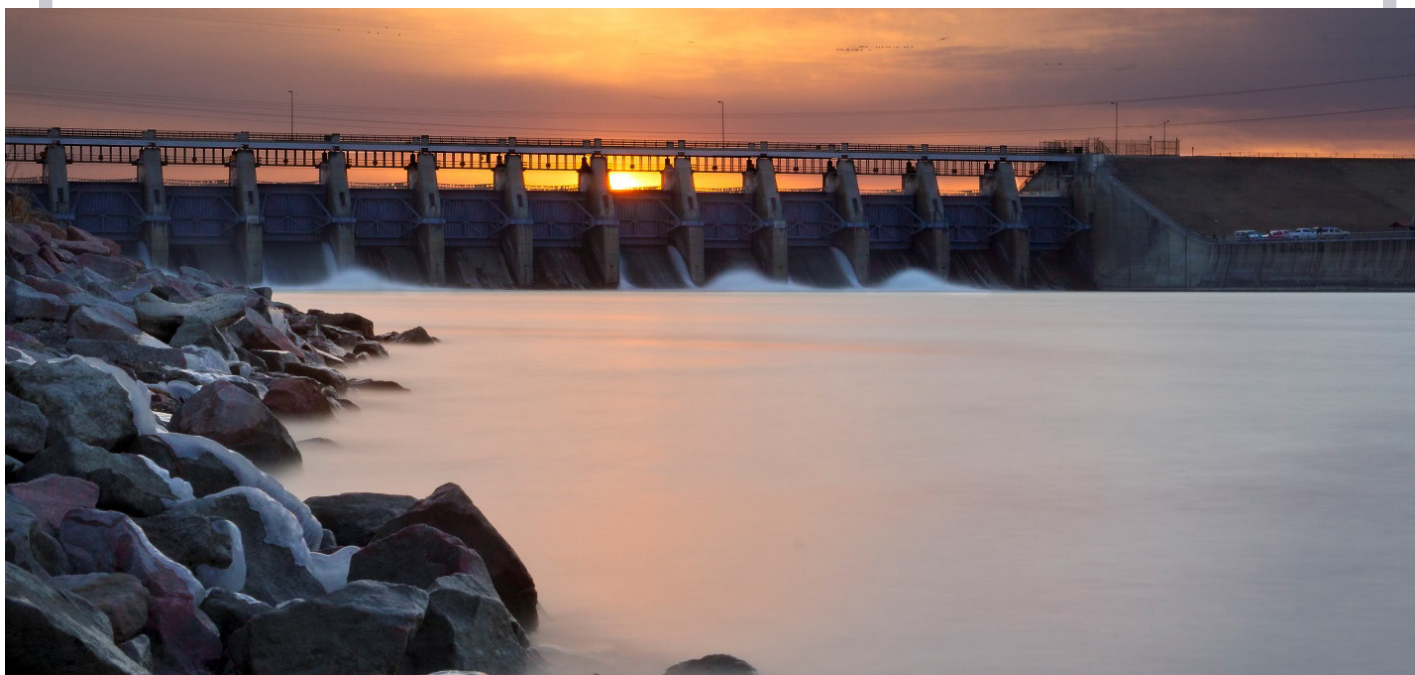
The AM Ad Hoc Group also worked in close coordination with the SPA Task Group of the SAM Work Group on the development of the draft AM bird cycle and associated questions for the ISAP to evaluate the draft cycle.

The AM Ad Hoc Group will work with the lead agencies and associated contractors in efforts to develop the AM governance approach to be included in the MRRMP and will craft associated recommendations for MRRIC consideration.

Human Considerations Ad Hoc Group Summary

The Human Considerations Ad Hoc Group was formed in January 2013 to provide a mechanism for MRRIC to have meaningful input about how possible management actions interact with human uses and interests on the river. Since its inception, the Ad Hoc Group has gathered and compiled information about members’ interests and has worked with MRRIC to provide a consensus recommendation regarding a set of human considerations objectives and metrics that may be used to evaluate alternatives. This recommendation and other products developed by the Ad Hoc Group reflect respect for individual values without constituting an endorsement of any position, and serve as key components of the Missouri River Recovery Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.

Throughout the fiscal year 2015, the Human Considerations Ad Hoc Group has worked with a ProACT-structured, decision-making coach to give feedback on the planning and process for incorporating human values into the evaluation of potential management actions. This has included discussions about developing and refining proxy metrics for members’ interests,



and providing feedback on the ways in which proposed management actions may affect these interests. Additionally, on MRRIC's behalf, the Ad Hoc Group has worked with an Independent Social Economic Technical Review panel to get the panel's feedback on the PrOACT process, the development of the Missouri Recovery Management Plan, and the development of the Adaptive Management governance process.

The Ad Hoc Group's efforts will continue into the fiscal year 2016.

Membership, Process and Procedures Ad Hoc Group Summary

The Membership, Process and Procedures (MP2) Ad Hoc Work Group addresses process and procedures related to the operations of MRRIC. The Work Group also assists with the lead agencies (USACE and USFWS) with aspects of stakeholder membership on MRRIC.

MRRIC did not require the services of the MP2 Work Group during the majority of fiscal year 2015. However, a charge for MP2 was approved at the August 2015 plenary meeting, with a task to review the MRRIC Charter and Operating Procedures and Ground Rules and recommend changes that would resolve issues regarding procedures for MRRIC, including but not limited to, in the sections entitled Membership and Representation of Interests; Appointments, Terms and Office; Attendance; and Roles, Responsibilities, and Leadership. The Ad Hoc Group will address this task during fiscal year 2016.

Fiscal Year Financials

USACE contracts with USIECR, an independent, impartial agency of the federal government to provide impartial consensus building, collaborative problem solving and facilitation services with its contracted partner RESOLVE; provide impartial Committee leadership through its contracted Committee Chair; convene MRRIC meeting and manage meeting logistics; and convene and facilitate coordination efforts of the Federal Working Group (federal agencies represented on the Committee) in support of MRRIC consensus-building efforts.

Fiscal Year Financials	Actual
U.S. Institute and Contractor Fees September 1, 2014 through August 31, 2015	
U.S. Institute Services, Direct Costs and Fees	
U.S. Institute Services (labor) - 1,661 hours*	\$182,782.71
U.S. Institute Direct Costs (e.g., phone charges and travel expenses)	\$29,279.05
10% Administrative Fee	\$169,519.61
A. Subtotal U.S. Institute (Services, Direct Costs, Fees)	\$381,581.37
Detail of U.S. Institute Contractor Fees	
Facilitation Team	\$621,313.22
Chair	\$81,744.82
ISAP	\$694,946.57
ISETR	\$331,953.61
B. Subtotal Contractor Fees (Labor and Direct Costs)	\$1,729,958.22
Total U.S. Institute and Contractor Fees (Sum of Lines A and B above)	\$2,111,539.59
Meeting Expenses (Committee meetings: fees for room rental, A/V, etc.)	\$104,906.52
TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES	\$2,216,446.11

**The U.S. Institute contributed 274 unbillable hours (with a value of \$33,067) to the MRRIC project over and above the hours listed.*

Meeting Schedule and Locations

The Committee meets quarterly at different locations throughout the Missouri River Basin. The locations and dates for this report are as follows:

November 4–6, 2014 – La Vista, Nebraska

February 24–26, 2015 – Kansas City, Missouri

May 19–21, 2015 – Sioux Falls, South Dakota

August 25–27, 2015 – Omaha, Nebraska

MRRIC Members

The Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee has nearly 70 members who represent a wide array of local, state, Tribal and federal interests throughout the Missouri River Basin. To view meeting attendance, please visit the ‘meetings’ tab online at www.MRRIC.org.

The 2014-2015 MRRIC members and alternates are as follows:

Stakeholder Categories	Stakeholder Members	Stakeholder Alternates
Agriculture	David Sieck	Trevor Whipple
	Don Borgman	Dan Engemann
At Large	Randy Asbury	Shane Kinne
	Brad Walker	
Conservation Districts	Jack Majeres	Bruce Biermann
Environmental/Conservation Org	Paul Lepisto	Bill Wenzel/Mike Leahy
	Tom Ball	James Redmond

Stakeholder Categories	Stakeholder Members	Stakeholder Alternates
Fish and Wildlife	Jason Skold	Todd Strole
	Jim Becic (MRRIC Vice Chair)	
Flood Control	Daniel Kuenzel	Donald Jorgensen/William Beacom
	Robert Vincze	
Hydropower	Bill Drummond	Chris VandVenter
Irrigation	Buzz Mattelin	Rachel Frost
Irrigation	Scott Heine	
Local Government	Carla Markt	Kathy Holstine
	Franklyn Pogge	Robert Williamson
Major Tributaries	Arthur Gehmert/Dan Rostad	Nicole McClain
	Ross Silcock	
Navigation	Lynn Muench	Tom Horgan
	Vicki Richmond	Richard Grenville
Recreation	Terry Fleck	Jill Denning Gackle
Thermal Power	Brian Barels	John Shadle
Water Quality	John Pozzo	Kevin Kersting
	Marian Maas	
Water Supply	Michael Armstrong	Joel Christensen
	Donald "Skip" Meisner	Rick Mach
Waterway Industries	David Shorr	
	Kenneth Reeder	

Missouri River Basin Tribes	Tribal Members	Tribal Alternates
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe	Robert Walters	Kevin Keckler
Chippewa-Cree Indians of the Rocky Boy's Reservation	Jim Morsette	Curtis Monteau
Crow Creek Sioux Tribe	Darrell Zephier	Sidney Bad Moccasin
Crow Tribe of Montana	Emerson Bullchief	
Eastern Shoshone Tribe of the Wind River Reservation	Baptiste Weed	
Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe	Elizabeth Wakeman	Anthony Reider
Fort Belknap Indian Community	John Allen	Dennis Longknife
Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes	Deb Madison	
Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska	Alan Kelley	
Lower Brule Sioux Tribe		Scott Jones
Oglala Sioux Tribe of the Pine Ridge Reservation	Reno Red Cloud	Daniel Two Bulls
Osage Nation	Maria Whitehorn	Joe Hall
Ponca Tribe of Nebraska	Randy Teboe	Gloria Hamilton
Prairie Band of Potawatomi Nation	Virginia LeClere	
Rosebud Sioux Tribe	Cyril Scott	Syed Huq
Santee Sioux Nation	Roger Trudell	David Henry
Spirit Lake Sioux Nation	Robert Thompson	Joan Black

Missouri River Basin Tribes	Tribal Members	Tribal Alternates
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Doug Crow Ghost	Joseph Smith
Three Affiliated Tribes of Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation	Antonia Fettig-Smith	
Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska	Darwin Snyder/Louis LaRose	
Yankton Sioux Tribe	Jody Allen Zephier	

States Represented	State Members	State Alternates
Iowa	Shawn Shouse	
Kansas	Steve Adams	Tracy Streeter
Missouri	Harry Bozoian / Ryan Mueller	Karen Rouse
Montana	Tim Bryggman	Steve Dalbey/Don Skaar
Nebraska	Shuhai Zheng	Susan France
North Dakota	Michelle Klose	Laura Ackerman
South Dakota	John Lott	Chris Longhenry
Wyoming	Sue Lowry	Jodee Pring/Beth Ross

Federal Agencies Represented	Federal Members	Federal Alternates
Bureau of Indian Affairs	Edward Parisian	Wayne Stone
Bureau of Land Management	Sandy Leach	
Bureau of Reclamation	Rae Olsen	Doug Epperly
Environmental Protection Agency	Damon Frizzell	Jim Berkley
Federal Highway Administration	Brian Yanchik	Kevin Moody
Maritime Administration	William Paape	
National Park Service	Steven Mietz / Rick Clark	Hector Santiago
National Weather Service/NOAA	Wendy Pearson	Doug Kluck
Natural Resources Conservation Service	Verlon Barnes	Craig Derickson
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	David Ponganis	Mary Roth / David Combs
U.S. Coast Guard	Byron Black	Scott Coder
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Michael Thabault	Casey Kruse
U.S. Geological Survey	Michael Slifer/Robert Swanson	Rip Shively
USDA Forest Service	Mark Goeden/John Hagengruber	
Western Area Power Administration	Robert Harris	Nick Stas / Matt Marsh

Committee Chairs		
	Chair, Dr. Michael Mac	
	Vice Chair, Jim Becic	
Annual Report Prepared by MRRIC		
Website: www.MRRIC.org E-mail: info@MRRIC.org		



